

# Minutes of Public Works Committee

## Tuesday, August 4, 2009

Present: Rob Crowner (Chair), Steve Braun, Mike Cann, Guilford Mooring (Superintendent, DPW), Don George, Charlie Moran, Vincent O'Connor.

### 1. Administrative

Minutes of June 2, 2009 accepted (6-0-0).

Next meeting set for: Tuesday, September 1, 2009, 7:00.

### 2. Old Business

#### Updates:

Guilford Mooring noted that the Lincoln Avenue barriers will go in September 8, per University request. Ideally this should be a two-week project, if all the traffic counters work. In this same project, for one week McClure Street will be closed off as well, in response to neighborhood concerns about rerouted traffic.

Atkins Corner: Guilford Mooring noted that roughly \$2 million of funding initially dedicated to the Atkins Corner roundabouts is now in jeopardy. The total project is expected to cost roughly \$7 million. The other \$5 million is in place as a congressional set-aside. In an effort to capture Economic Recovery funds, the Atkins Corner project was moved from Federal Aid Target Projects with Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding, to Federal Aid Non-Target Projects with Economic Recovery (ER) funds. We need to appeal that the Atkins Corner funding be moved back, to STP funding, because ER funding is not now certain and the project cannot go ahead without certain funding. Of the projects in its category, Atkins Corner ranks second in priority behind a Westfield project. The MPO meets to hear appeals on August 19 at 10:00 a.m. at the West Springfield City Hall. Letters are due by August 17.

**Moved:** that PWC draft a letter in support of the Atkins project to be sent to MPO via Tim Brennan of the PVPC by 8/17.

#### **Voted( 6-0-0).**

CM volunteered to draft letter, Steve Braun to collaborate. (Letter attached)

Sand Hill Road: no action from Select Board yet. Plans complete, surveys complete. PWC had endorsed a waiver of the state standard width so that the road could keep its present width; the state standard width was endorsed by both the Planning Board & Shade Tree Committee. After meeting with the residents, this plan will likely be scaled back somewhat. Sand Hill Road is used as a cut-through to Pine Street. The DPW will do the south piece first—from top of hill to Pine Street.

Pelham Road: still at the survey process. PW is finishing downtown, finishing the Rolling Ridge sewer project. Nothing new on Pelham Road.

Sidewalk Plowing Policy. Steve Braun presented a map of existing plowed streets. At present, sidewalks on streets abutting Town property are plowed, and the streets that the machines have to travel to get to these properties are plowed along the way. The total is about 20 of the Town's 60 miles of sidewalks.

After much discussion, the Committee asked the Superintendent for cost estimates of three plans:

Plan A: plow sidewalks only abutting Town land (updated to reflect changes in Town ownership).

Plan B: plow sidewalks of Plan A plus sidewalks on the way to the sidewalks of Plan A. This represents the present system, but modified to reflect changes in Town ownership of particular parcels.

Plan C: Do sidewalks likely used by students walking to town schools (e.g. Shays, West Street, North Pleasant (for Marks Meadow, likely this year only, and for UMass from Puffton etc.); sidewalks that are heavily used to get to Town centers and are on roads unsafe to walk in winter—e.g. Rte 9 west of Town. Exclude subdivisions. In addition, develop a separate cost estimate for plowing downtown sidewalks—expensive, because of much hand-work.

Puffers Pond Bridge: On one-year review. On end of state-wide list of bridges to be designed to be replaced. If it is determined that the bridge is so unsafe it must be closed, then it moves to the head of the list. In that case, it would go onto the list of bridges to be constructed. Bridge is likely closed within 5 years. Vince O'Connor noted that he wanted sidewalks on both sides of the bridge and wants to save the abutments. Guilford Mooring noted that the abutments are failing. Mr. O'Connor further argued that PWC should sponsor a meeting with the Historical Commission, the Planning Board, and the Conservation Commission, followed by a joint meeting with folks in the neighborhood. Guilford Mooring suggested that the bridge might become one-way traffic, and that if it had two sidewalks it would be extremely wide. Don George noted that most bridges of this length are designed out of a handbook. There is very little innovation or modification.

The discussion was tabled.

**New business:**

Next Meeting: Tuesday, Sept. 1, 7:00.

Steve Braun was elected Chair by a vote of 6-0-0.

Rob Crowner was elected Vice Chair by a vote of 6-0.

Charlie Moran noted that in the Town Bylaws, p. 12, PWC membership is fixed at 5. Rob Crowner agreed to bring this to the attention of the Select Board.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15.

Respectfully Submitted,

Charlie Moran, Sec'y Pro Tem.